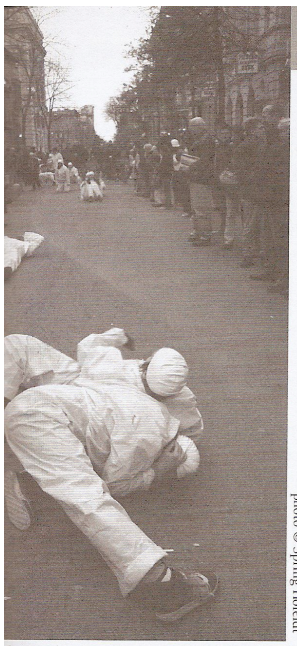


photo © Spring Hofeldt

ih Worden and *[foreground]* Margit anter in *The stroll*, conceived by Jack ai, including scores by Ione Beauchamp HuDL (Hudson Valley Dance Lab), at Victorian Stroll; Troy, NY, December 3, 6.

Little Glimmers

by Margit Galanter

The events described in this writing permeate the edges that define what it means to make a piece. My creative focus is often in contexts as much as in the material of the work—if I am a part of their invention, I can find myself more fully engaged in the dance. Certain spaces invoke in me the ability to dance-with, a rich territory. In dancing-with, *my physicality contributes to shaping the environment, so the lines between context and content are not so clear. Through tending to the subtleties of both these elements, what emerges is ripe and palpable. For me, this is the dance.*

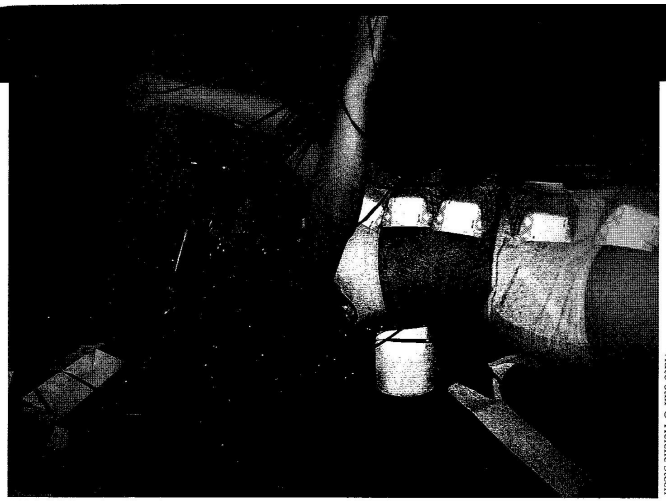
TRASHION: Jack Magai and his son Francis, Beth Ahlstrand, and I spent several weeks gathering trash from dumpsters in preparation for our installation/compost event, part of an evening of recycled fashion in Troy, NY. We were fascinated with the multiples: of paper, metal, and plastic objects, massive wooden spools, and pounds of rice that we cooked into various concoctions. Both in and out of the storefront window at Revolution Hall, we used the trash to create environments, fashion pieces, and tools for our action. Like farmers, we cultivated the landscape. I well remember the smells, and milking a cow of old film thread over my body until I became a pile of my own detritus. Francis painted his dad and the window with blobs of rice porridge.

VICTORIAN STROLL: In outdoor performance, I become a member of a newly invented society, however short-lived. The Stroll is a one-day-a-year event in which masses of people fill the streets of Troy, celebrating the Victorian Era. Folks dress up as the elite or as beggars and stroll, or ride horse and carriages or old fire trucks. Initiated by Jack, eight of us improvised off of some scores associated with Melville. We were dressed all in white (embodying Moby Dick). The Stroll was carnivalesque; we found ourselves *among* difference.

My favorite part of the work was entering the imaginal corridor into performing; I was walking in an alleyway with Sue Lauther, and there was this *it* that began to come in through me, and I knew we were entering into the state of the dance. Space began to open up in our conversation. My actions got more conscious, more rarified. By the time we rounded the corner, the context revealed itself, as did the dance.

The conditions of some events contain enough dynamism that the participation of dancing-with *arises on its own.*

LABS: Labs are participatory environments that stimulate creative research. Labs invent their content through self-initiation and accumulation of shared practice. Labs expand the field of discovery beyond what one can imagine solo. There is potential for artistic circulation and generative development both for the movers who join in, and for the local community exposed to its activities. We have started a weekly lab in Troy called **ESL**. We are investigating the **S**cores that **E**merge in the **L**ab setting. For a while we showed something every week, because as we were ending, the Aikido folks were lining up behind the big glass-paneled studio walls to come in and set up their mats. I liked their furtive glances.



video still © Helene Steen

Margit Galanter in *End-Products*, by Jack and Francis Magai, Beth Ahlstrand, and Margit Galanter, for Trashion; Revolution Hall, Troy, NY, October 3, 2006.

There is a Chinese word, shi, *which signifies the breath that lives in form and makes itself felt through it. The polarity of form/content is not so clear from this perspective, yet it is this very tension that provides for the form. It is in continual process.*

A few years ago there was a critical time in my dancing when I tapped into underlying sources of why I move. It provided me with a constellation of pathways and seeds for investigation. These lifelines, as I embody them now, are filled with potentiality and dynamism and engender particular forms of practice and events. This configuration is in constant motion as composition is actualized through experience.

I unlearn and I learn this. Over time, creative streams develop, sometimes even enough to become a thing, and at rare moments, they glimmer. It's like tending a fire—create the conditions for blaze and let the embers offer heat and a spectrum of colors.

THE QUILT: *The Quilt* was part of the **Movement Research Festival 2005: Open Source** in NYC that I co-curated. The festival was a hub of contexts that invited participation and offered the specificity of a situation. *The Quilt* gathered inter/national artists whom we enjoyed imagining together (dk Pan, Melanie Maar, Sakura Shimada, Sheri Brown, Victor Zambrano, and Yoyoyogasmana). They had access to two spaces (courtesy of Chashama) that were both window storefronts in the Garment District, and we invited them to use the street space between the two as well. The spot was nestled near Macy's holiday shopping and a Quizno's sub shop. I spent a lot of time there as host. These artists invented a feast of events: videos, performance art, duet dances, and late-night action with objects. One evening, *The Quilt* had a performance in the narrower of the two spaces, which had glass doors leading into it. It started with Victor's solo: part b-boy, part Mummenshanz, part postmod formalism. It was incredibly cold that night. People entered and exited until the glass became the portal of flow for (be)coming inside and outside. With that unexpected circulation of performers and viewers, the show became a Happening. I walked through the glass door several times, feeling the two spaces and the difference. I can recollect Daniel sitting against the wall inside; his arm was lifting in slow unison with that big burly drunk man who caught people's eyes and danced with the performers. The man pissed on himself, perhaps keeping warm. Little glimmers.

Form is action is context is content. When I dance, if I put my attention to it, I can feel the thickness of the air and it changes (me) as I move through it. Through composing (this word, this dance), I am making space.

photo © Spring Hofeldt

Margit Galanter *[left]* and Sarah Worden in *The stroll,* conceived by Jack Magai, including scores by Ione Beauchamp and HuDL (Hudson Valley Dance Lab), at the Victorian Stroll, Troy, NY, December 3, 2006.

RUG DANCES: I had my second rug dance in Minneapolis on a gorgeous rug in Olive and Otto's living room. A rug is a clearly defined territory, with texture, pattern, implicit intimacy. Rugs are often filled with history. I go to people's houses and dance on their rug for them. This context is often invented; it happens mostly in my dreams.

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